



CARE & REPAIR



# *Case study*

## Reducing Delayed Transfer of Care through housing interventions: Evidence of Impact



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## The Issue

A record number of older people remain in hospital for longer than is clinically necessary<sup>†</sup>, or are being discharged to a care home or nursing home when, with changes to their housing, many would be able to live independently.

*Discharging older people from hospital NAO Report May 2016\**

Others may be discharged home without the right support being in place, resulting in readmissions and/or further health decline.

<sup>†</sup> Source: National Audit Office (2016) Discharging older patients from hospital

## A Housing Solution

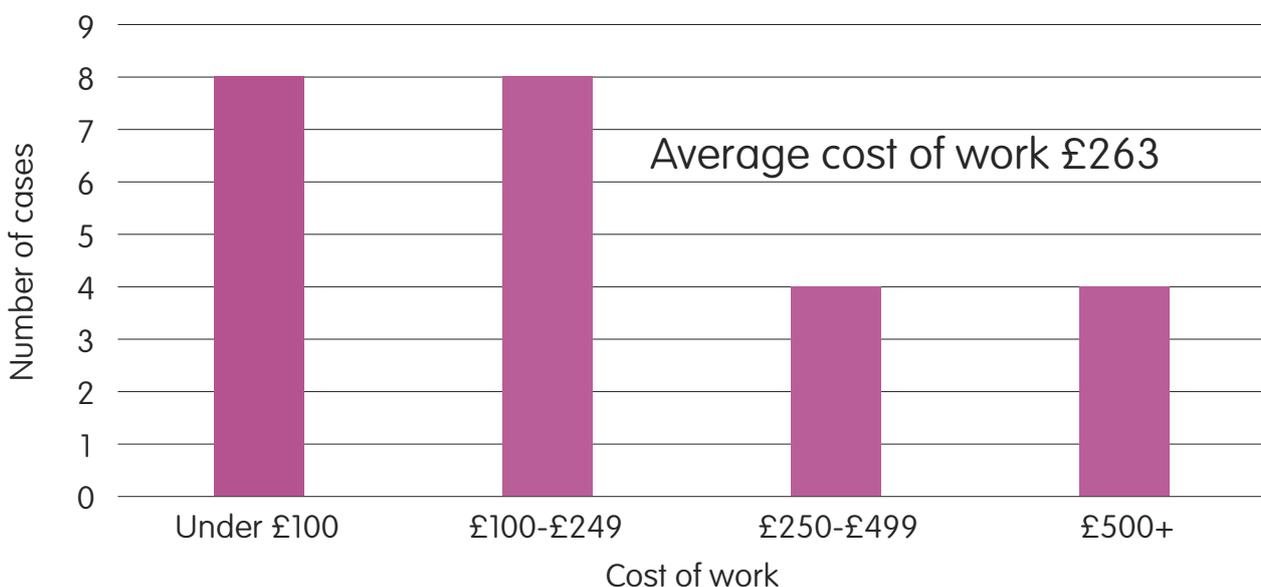
To enable older patients to return home from hospital more rapidly and safely, West of England Care & Repair (WE C&R) organises and/or carries out;

- clutter clearance/deep cleaning to make home sanitary
- urgent home repairs to make home safe & secure
- sanitation e.g. broken toilet, washing facility
- hazards removal e.g. falls risks, electrical wiring dangers
- heating systems repaired/emergency heating
- small, essential adaptations e.g. stair rail

Some patients can pay for the work themselves but others (eg. on low incomes, with dementia or mental health problems) may have no resources.

*This is where the Dolphin Society charitable funding in Bristol has made a big impact. Through providing small grants via WE C&R (average value £263) to pay for these critical minor works, patients have been discharged rapidly from hospital back to their own homes, freeing up hospital beds and saving time and money for health and care services.*

### Total cost of work including labour and materials



\* <https://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Discharging-older-patients-from-hospital-Summary.pdf>

## The Impact

An *independent evaluation*\* of the Dolphin funded hospital discharge scheme has assessed how the housing interventions by WE C&R affected the length of stay in hospital and examined resulting time savings for hospital and social care staff.

The evaluation examined all case records, interviewed 15 hospital staff and undertook an in depth analysis of a sample of 4 cases. The latter identified:

- a saving in hospital bed days of **£13,526**
- the cost of the housing interventions to achieve that saving was **£948**
- this is a cost benefit ratio of **14:1**
- in addition, savings in hospital staff time amounted to a further **£897**

Whilst noting that the in depth sample was small, the evaluator concluded that the findings were indicative of potentially huge savings that a practical and effective Home from Hospital housing intervention service can generate for the health service. Most cases created savings simply in terms of reductions in the time spent by health professionals, let alone the cost of a hospital bed.

The evaluation concluded that a clear business case exists for funding a service capable of co-ordinating and meeting the cost of small and fast repairs (by the HIA handypersons) and organising minor adaptations, decluttering, repairs and deep cleaning by trusted contractors.

*“Older people have a history of not calling on services, have low expectations and it is only when we come to talk to them about being ready to go home medically or talk to their carers that we find out that they have been struggling and that their houses are in very poor condition”.*

Hospital nurse

*THE DEMENTIA LINK: One of the dementia care matrons said that deep cleaning and decluttering cause the longest delays as they cannot get anyone to agree to pay for it, or go in and do it, but it often gives the best chance for a safe discharge.*

## Case study

Mrs Trent, 78, was admitted to the Bristol Royal Infirmary for inflammation of the gall bladder but could not be discharged home when medically ready because of the state of her home.

She had lived in her house for over 50 years, but recently had spent most of her time in a single armchair in a restricted space in her front room, which may have contributed to her ill-health. Each room was so full of possessions that she was unable to prepare food, keep clean or move around. She hadn't invited anyone into her home for more than three years and her dog was in 'foster care'.

### **WE C&R organised:**

- Clearance: Kitchen and front room made safe by clearing designated possessions
- Repair: A WE C&R contractor fixed a leaking waste pipe and removed a trip hazard in the entrance and enabled access at the rear of the property
- Adaptation: WE C&R Handypersons mounted a mopstick handrail to the stairs

### **In addition, the WE C&R caseworker referred her for:**

- benefits check -as her DLA had been withdrawn despite her mobility and care issues,
- social services assessment to address personal care and meals issues
- local befriender/volunteer organisation.



Mrs Trent is overjoyed with the result and the WE C&R 'Making Space' volunteer project is helping her to clear the rest of the house. WE C&R will then fundraise to pay for a deep clean throughout. The work done by WE C&R has not only made it possible for Mrs Trent to return home from hospital faster, it is also reconnecting her with friends, family ...and her dog.

**Cost of work including labour and materials = £370**

**Estimated bed days saved = 14**

**Saving NHS (at £600 per day for a surgical bed) =  
£8,400**

### **About West of England Care & Repair**

West of England Care and Repair is a non-profit making organisation committed to delivering and developing services for older people and disabled people to enable them to remain in their own homes and live independent lives. The largest independent Home Improvement Agency in England and in 2016 they celebrated winning The HIA of the Year Award in their 30th year.

Core services include

- Information and advice line
- Handyperson service
- Caseworker support
- Technical help with home adaptations and repairs
- Specialist bathroom adaptations service
- Housing options service

### **About The Dolphin Society**

The Dolphin Society helps older and disabled people on low incomes in the Bristol area to live independently and safely in their own homes.

The Dolphin Society's objects are:

(a) the relief of elderly or disabled persons who are resident in Bristol and its adjoining local authority areas and who are in need, hardship or distress to maintain a high quality of life and independence by such means as are appropriate, including assisting and supporting them to live in their own homes;

(b) the provision of support for the elderly and disabled in need, hardship or distress in such other charitable ways as shall be proposed by the President for the time being in any appeal made on behalf of the Society.

## About Foundations

Foundations is appointed by the Department of Communities and Local Government to oversee a national network of nearly 200 home improvement agencies (HIAs) across England and to lead on the transformation of the Disabled Facilities Grant.

HIAs are locally commissioned services that ensure people are able to stay safe, secure and warm and retain independence in their own home. They offer holistic services to their clients, helping to improve a person's wellbeing as well as offering practical solutions around the home.

Foundations is a signatory of the *Health and Housing Memorandum of Understanding\**

[www.foundations.uk.com](http://www.foundations.uk.com)

## About Care & Repair England

Care & Repair England is an independent charitable organisation which aims to improve older people's housing. It believes that all older people should have decent living conditions in a home of their own choosing.

It innovates, develops, promotes and supports practical housing initiatives, and the related policy and practice, which enable older people to live independently in their own homes for as long as they wish, particularly for older people living in poor or unsuitable private sector housing.

For further good practice information about housing and hospital discharge see: [careandrepair-england.org.uk/home-from-hospital-initiatives/](http://careandrepair-england.org.uk/home-from-hospital-initiatives/)

[www.careandrepair-england.org.uk](http://www.careandrepair-england.org.uk)   [info@careandrepair-england.org.uk](mailto:info@careandrepair-england.org.uk)

\* <http://foundations.uk.com/resources/health-and-housing/pioneering-health-and-housing-memorandum-of-understanding/>

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For more good practice case studies and further information about housing and health see our website: [www.wecr.org.uk](http://www.wecr.org.uk)

We would welcome any feedback about content: email: [info@wecr.org.uk](mailto:info@wecr.org.uk)

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